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1. Warn the public that a movement is on to discredit and eliminate modern languages from the high schools and interest them in discouraging such a course.

2. State the practical and the disciplinary value of the modern language course.

3. Show that since the close of the war modern languages have become an absolute necessity for the average educated person in order to intelligently follow the social, economic and political movements of the modern nations.

4. Demonstrate by facts to superintendents and boards that modern languages are fully the equals in importance of other required subjects.

No clever words or sophistry will convince our opponents; we must use plain language and sound arguments. As languages mean so much to us who teach them, we are called upon to educate the public and the superintendents to the necessity of our subject in the high school. I earnestly hope that each teacher will pledge himself to do his share to cooperate in a movement which will prove that languages have both practical and disciplinary value.

In fine, whatever is to be done must be done now; spurred on by the worthy cause we must combat this vicious tendency which is dictated neither by high educational ideals nor by good judgment.

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## Reviews

*PRACTICAL FRENCH PHONETICS* by T. MACIRONE, New York, Allyn and Bacon. 1921. 97 pp. +43 (Vocabulary).

The "book aims to help students of French to overcome the difficulties which confront them when they try to acquire a correct pronunciation of that language." A chapter each is devoted to "What Phonetics Does," "Formation of the Mouth and Throat. Speech Sounds," "Vowel Sounds," "Consonants," "Daily Exercises," "Phonetic Transcription of French Stories."

"What Phonetics Does" is an exposition of the advantages of the phonetic method in teaching pronunciation; the chapter entitled "Formation of the Mouth and Throat. Speech Sounds" is clear and free from unnecessary technical terms. The two fol-

lowing chapters treating of the vowels and consonants are not so satisfactory. In a book intended for American students, the author has not always kept in mind the difficulties they encounter. For example "é", closed "eu," closed "o," closed "ou," are frequently faulty because of too great a separation of the teeth; on the contrary, the open vowels are often incorrect because the teeth are held too close together. One could have hoped for some indication of the degree of the separation of the teeth in the production of the vowels. After giving practical directions for the lengthening of the consonants, the author neglects the fact that the semi-consonants are likewise lengthened and contents himself in the case of *w* with the statement that "This is practically the same consonant as in English" (p. 24). Again the directions for the production of "è"; "put your tongue a little farther back than for "é," or "Pronounce i-é-è-a-á-ò-ó-u, and notice: (1) that the tongue starts in the front of the mouth and is gradually drawn back" (p. 34) can tend only to cause the American to accentuate his common fault of holding the tongue too far away from the front teeth while pronouncing all of the front vowels. Singing each sound (p. 25) recommends itself as a practical device in overcoming the tendency of diphthongize the vowels, but the direction, "Say it (ó) very slowly, so as to divide your diphthong into two parts" (p. 24) or "Most people pronounce the vowel (è) with two vowel sounds, that is with a diphthongal vowel, etc." would seem to indicate a misconception of the nature of the English diphthong as it does not consist of two vowel sounds only, but of a multiplicity of vowel sounds, since the positions of jaw and tongue are constantly shifting in its production.

In the discussion of nasal vowels, the injunction "Do not let your tongue touch your palate at all. If you do, it will make the sound a consonant, not a vowel" is hardly practical because Americans knowing this still pronounce *n*, *m*, and *ng*, after nasal vowels and not just *ng* as one would seem obliged to infer from the discussion of nasal "a," p. 32.

Descriptions of sound as "more hollow" (p. 23), "round" (p. 24), or "thick" (p. 47) are too vague to be of use in a phonetic treatise.

"There is very little to be said about "f"; it is a voiceless consonant so pronounce it gently in French" (p. 44) or "This is the voiceless *sh* sound, usually spelled *ch* in French. Pronounce it less energetically than in English" (p. 44), is misleading. All consonants are pronounced more energetically in French than in English.

As French "r's" differ from English "r" in that they are always distinctly pronounced" (p. 46), a Scotch "r" or any other variety of trilled English "r" should be satisfactory in French; but this is clearly not the case.

The author has omitted all discussion of consonant groups, of division of syllables, of linking, of stress, of intonation.

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LE FRANÇAIS ET SA PATRIE, BY L. RAYMOND TALBOT.  
Benj. H. Sanborn and Co., 1920.

Ever since this book made its appearance, nearly ten years ago, we have felt that it needed a thorough overhauling before it could be used as a "French" reader. We were, therefore, much interested when we read in a Newsletter sent out by the publishers that "the very latest edition" was available. We sent a cheque for \$1.32 and received a copy which we read with eager curiosity. Our curiosity soon became amazement, and amazement soon changed to something else and made us say a few things in French and a lot more in English which cannot be printed out of respect for the ladies.

The "very latest edition" starts off with a map of the France of ten years ago, with Alsace-Lorraine a part of Germany, and page 30, line 13, states that *Strasbourg est une ville allemande*. This, we thought, may stand *à la rigueur*; the author visited France ten years ago, conditions have changed since that time, he probably explains that in another part. We turned to a comparison of "the very latest edition" with the fourth, dated 1913. We found the same number of pages, and the same pages beginning with the same words. We also found the same misprints. In both editions, on page 18, line 14 has *eglise* without an accent; page 16, l. 22, has *Champs Élysées* without a hyphen; page 59, l. 10, spells *Sédan* for *Sedan*; both editions end page 50 with a *recut* that lacks a cedilla; both editions, on p. 139, l. 21, and in the vocabulary, give *passionément* instead of *passionnément*; both the fourth and "the very latest edition," p. 157, l. 7, have *hâchis* with a circumflex that should not be there; in both editions the vocabulary, p. 260, lists the singular *ébat* which does not exist; in both editions, the same page 260 spells *empacqueter* with a superfluous c; in both editions page 274 lists *mourrir* for *mourir*. This seemed so strange that we thought for a moment that some office boy had made a mistake and sent us the old fourth edition when we had insisted on having for our money a copy of "the very latest." Alas! Even this comfort was to be denied us. For we finally discovered that what we had received really was the "very latest edition." After the preface, half a dozen lines branding the fourth as such have been omitted from "the very latest," and on the title page the date 1920 leaves no doubt about this being a new "edition." The old plates apparently grind out the new copies. The foreman of the